

2 June 1963

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MEMORANDUM: Soviet Military Activity in Cuba

1. There has been a discernible change in the nature of Soviet military activity in Cuba over the past several weeks, as training of Cuban forces by Soviets has increased. [redacted] in particular has tended to suggest an increase in some kinds of Soviet activity in Cuba, while other sources have indicated a falling off in certain areas of Soviet military activity. To date, we have detected nothing which would indicate a decision by the Soviets to reintroduce strategic weapons for use against the US.

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2. The changes now being observed among Soviet forces in Cuba in part date back to the first withdrawals of troops in mid-February 1963. Since then, at least 5,000 Soviet personnel, most of them military, have departed Cuba. These withdrawals probably reflect two major influences: one, a desire on the part of the Soviet leadership to appear accommodating to US demands and thus forestall any US intent to invade Cuba; second, a decision ultimately to reduce the extent of direct Soviet military involvement in Cuba by training Cubans in the use of Soviet arms.

3. The totality of evidence from all sources--

[redacted]
[redacted] suggests that activity being observed and reported is related to the changing role of the Soviet forces as they initiate and intensify the training of Cubans in the Soviet weapons systems. [redacted]

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the Soviets appear to have turned over at least one of their major camps, equipment and all, to Cuban caretaker forces.

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5. Viewed from the perspective of Soviet shipping, the present pattern of Soviet activity in Cuba is substantially different from that of last summer. At that time, large quantities of military equipment were being shipped into Cuba and large numbers of troops were arriving. In the three months between July and October 1962, some 80 ships with full military cargoes arrived in Cuba. By contrast, only 4 full military cargoes have arrived during the past seven months, none of them in the large-hatch ships that brought the strategic missiles to Cuba last fall.

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